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MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

MEDIA RELEASE

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**“FROM IDEAS TO IMPACT”: ASEAN-UK SYMPOSIUM TO DEVELOP THE ASEAN CREATIVE ECONOMY SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK**

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KUALA LUMPUR, 20 February 2025 - The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, the United Kingdom Mission to ASEAN, the British Council and Cultural Associates Oxford, has successfully convened the ASEAN-UK Symposium on the Development of ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework on 20-21 February 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This pivotal symposium served as a key platform for advancing the region's cultural and creative industries and fostering sustainable development within the ASEAN Creative Economy (ACE).

Over 100 participants, consisting of ASEAN policymakers, academia, and practitioners were engaged to discuss the development of cultural and creative industries within the regional creative economy. It facilitated the exchange of ideas and evidence-based approaches for promoting the creative economy, with insights from the UK experts and practitioners. Ultimately, the goal is to create a framework outlining a shared vision and strategic directions for advancing the ASEAN Creative Economy. The ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework is a key deliverable for Malaysia as it chairs the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) and ASEAN in 2025.

The two-day event featured panel discussions from ASEAN and UK experts, together with workshop sessions that deliberated on the desired cultural, economic, environmental, and social outcomes to achieve in the development of ASEAN Creative Economy, as well as identified sectoral priorities and institutional mechanisms to drive regional development.

ACE Symposium 2025 is a key milestone in the ongoing efforts to foster closer collaboration between ASEAN member states and the United Kingdom in shaping a robust, inclusive, and sustainable creative economy. By leveraging the expertise and insights shared during the symposium, stakeholders aim to forge stronger partnerships, enhance regional capabilities, and implement innovative strategies that will bolster the cultural and creative industries across ASEAN. This collaborative effort underscores the importance of creativity and culture as vital drivers of economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability, ultimately positioning the ASEAN Creative Economy as a global leader in cultural exchange and innovation.

In his opening remarks, Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn highlighted the importance of the ASEAN Creative Economy, “The ASEAN Creative Economy covers many policy areas, including culture and the arts, intellectual property, MSMEs, tourism, education, services, labour, gender and information, among others.” He also commended the role of the Symposium in bringing together key officials from ASEAN sectoral bodies and partners from the UK to develop the ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework, which he believed “will serve as a roadmap to guide cross-sectoral collaboration towards achieving meaningful social, cultural, economic, and environmental outcomes in fostering our creative economy.”

Ambassador of the UK to ASEAN, H. E. Sarah Tiffin said, “The United Kingdom is proud to support ASEAN’s effort to establish a robust and sustainable creative sector. Creativity and innovation are at the heart of the UK’s industrial strategy, driving economic growth, digital innovation, and cultural exchange. By sharing our expertise and collaborating on the ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework, we are not only strengthening ASEAN creative industries but also fostering a future where creativity serves a cornerstone for inclusive growth. Through this partnership, we are laying the foundation for stronger cultural ties, innovative businesses, and a thriving regional economy that benefit generations to come.”

Summer Xia, Director Southeast Asia, British Council said, “The ASEAN-UK Symposium marks a powerful step forward in our shared vision of a thriving, innovative, and sustainable creative economy. Through our ASEAN-UK Advancing Creative Economy

Programme, we are deepening connections, sparking new ideas, and shaping policies that empower creative industries to flourish.

From our launch event in Jakarta last year to this gathering in Kuala Lumpur, the growing momentum of UK-ASEAN collaboration is clear. The launch of Arts and Technologies in ASEAN: Interconnected Parts at this symposium reinforces the British Council's commitment to championing creativity as a force for progress, inclusion, and economic growth. We look forward to continuing this journey with our ASEAN partners—unlocking new possibilities, amplifying creative voices, and driving lasting impact across the region."

The opening ceremony of the ACE Symposium 2025 was officiated by the Honourable Mr. Khairul Firdaus Akhbar Khan, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia on 20 February 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. H.E. Datuk Wira Roslan Tan Sri Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia, and H.E. Sarah Tiffin, Ambassador of United Kingdom Mission to ASEAN were also present at the opening ceremony.

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